

them across our country, and the threat of astronomical tariffs looms large.

As a result, a number of our colleagues are deeply concerned about the impact of the Commerce investigation not only on the solar industry but also on our ability to combat the climate crisis and meet President Biden's bold climate goals. We are already in danger of running out of time to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. I know that. The Presiding Officer knows that. All our colleagues realize that. Now this investigation threatens to create an unforced error—an unforced error—in our commitment to protect our planet. We don't have time for an unforced error. We are not waiting for the climate crisis to arrive; the climate crisis is here, and it is here now.

Without bold action, our country and our planet will continue to feel ever more devastating impacts. Already, in the last year alone, we have witnessed wildfires burning millions of acres in California, Montana, Arizona, and other Western States—fires as big as my State. The same hurricane that knocked out access to power and water for a million people in Louisiana and Mississippi then went on to produce flash floods in New Jersey and New York. People there actually drowned in their basements, unable to escape the torrent of floodwater.

To prevent further devastating, irreversible effects of climate change and protect our planet for future generations, we need to continue transitioning our Nation and our planet away from fossil fuels. Among other things, we should be doing everything in our power to lift up innovators in the solar industry, to boldly cut emissions from our power sector, and to attack this climate crisis head-on. But, unfortunately, the Commerce Department's investigation threatens to hamstring one of the strongest weapons in our fight: clean renewable energy.

The prospect of as much as a 250-percent tariff on solar products will have an immediate, disastrous impact on a leading renewable energy source for our Nation. Effectively, we would be punishing the very green industry that is helping to lead the charge to curb emissions and further reduce our Nation's reliance on fossil fuels.

We would be punishing the hundreds of thousands of Americans who work in the solar industry. In fact, the Solar Energy Industries Association estimates that this investigation currently underway threatens 70,000 jobs between now and 2025—70,000 jobs. But more than that, we have heard from businesses in the solar industry that say that the very threat of these tariffs is already freezing imports needed to build solar infrastructure and bolster our defense against the climate crisis.

The idea that solar companies may have to sit around waiting for January 2023 to come around just to see if industry-rocking tariffs will be announced—that alone is destabilizing. It

is worse than destabilizing; it already risks bringing investments to a standstill, while adding uncertainty to the solar market and pushing utility companies to slow their transition away from fossil fuels out of fear for a change in American climate priorities, because that is what is at stake here. What do we value? Are we committed to a clean energy future, a transition to a 100-percent carbon pollution-free electric sector by 2035 and to protecting American jobs and lives from an impending climate crisis or are we OK with the status quo, with holding back our renewable energy prospects and continuing to let politics dictate our planet's future?

Across this Nation, Americans are feeling the effects of climate change in every storm surge and every coastal flood. We certainly see that in my home State of Delaware. We are the lowest lying State in America. The seas around us are rising. My State is sinking. Americans across the country are ready to do whatever it takes to save our planet and create a ton of jobs at the same time.

I implore the Biden administration to swiftly expedite its investigation rather than drag this process out and add to the uncertainty of businesses across our country and to rule out retroactive, job-killing tariffs in the process.

In this moment—in this moment—we have to act with greater urgency to drive down emissions. In this moment, we have to unleash the power of American clean energy. In this moment, we need to protect our planet for generations to come.

To fall short of our commitment would be to let down all of those who inherit this planet from us. Make no mistake, future generations will look back at this critical moment in our Nation's history to see what we did when our planet was on the line. Heaven forbid they look back and see that our own hand—our own hand—forced this error.

Again, I implore this administration to end this investigation, lift up the solar industry, and help us meet our Nation's climate goals.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, the first stanza of our national anthem ends with "O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?"

We sing this part as a triumphant declaration, but if you read the lyrics of the "Star-Spangled Banner," the sentence actually ends with a question mark. Francis Scott Key intended this line to be sung as a question rather than a statement. That is fitting because, while our freedom may be concrete, hate and evil threaten the security of our freedom from one generation to the next.

Over the years, our national anthem took on a feeling of confidence and as-

surance rather than uncertainty, and that is thanks to the millions of men and women who bravely answered the call to serve. Many soldiers lost their lives to give us the security we all enjoy and the assurance we are proud of. That is what we keep in our hearts and on our minds as we honor the fallen on this Memorial Day.

Throughout the course of our Nation's history, our freedom has been protected by those who stood toe to toe with hate and evil, endured sleepless nights on the battlefield, rough days at sea, harsh conditions in the desert, and years living in a far corner of the globe so that we, as Americans, can sleep peacefully in the comfort and security of our home.

Sadly, some of our Nation's heroes never ever returned. My State of Alabama lost 2,500 soldiers during World War I, 5,114 soldiers during World War II, and hundreds and hundreds of others in wars since.

Alabama pays tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice with memorials across our State. More than 400,000 people visit the USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park in Mobile annually, where they learn more about our military and those who served. The city of Trussville, AL, recently broke ground on the Alabama Fallen Warrior Monument to honor Alabama servicemembers killed since 9/11.

But these sites are more than just landmarks; they tell stories of countless lives that were forever changed—the stories of daughters, sons, husbands, wives, mothers, and fathers who answered the call to defend our country at home and abroad, not knowing what their future would hold; stories of mothers who hugged their children and husbands who kissed their wives without knowing if it was for the last time. Every year on Memorial Day, we pause to honor these heroes and reflect on the price they have paid for our freedom.

Today, I would like to recognize some of Alabama's fallen soldiers who have paid freedom's high cost and the Gold Star families who still grieve from their absence.

Many of our fallen servicemembers had not yet reached the prime of their lives. Some were still in high school when they answered the call to service. That is true for PFC James Joshua, Jr., of Gadsden, AL, who left high school to become a U.S. marine at the young age of 18. This bright young man adored his family, and his dreams for his life were like that of many 18-year-olds.

Private Joshua had great aspirations of travel, and he wanted a successful career, but he also felt a higher calling to serve his country in Vietnam. The second oldest of eight children, Private Joshua was a natural protector who wanted to make sure his family and his country were safe, so he deployed as a marine, but he never returned home. On May 22, 1968, his life was cut short. He was killed when his company was

attacked with mortars in Vietnam's Quang Tri Province.

Private Joshua's younger sister Judy recalls getting ready for her high school graduation when the notification officers arrived with news of her brother's passing. A day that started as a celebration of graduation turned into a day of tragedy as she, her mother, and her sisters received the news. Still Judy remembers the screams in shock and despair.

The Joshua family never got over the passing of their beloved brother and son James. Judy's mom especially struggled to cope with the loss. She passed away from a heart attack at age 49, which Judy attributes to the grief she experienced following the tragic loss.

Private Joshua was posthumously awarded a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart for his courage and his bravery. His hometown of Gadsden honors his service at Central-Carver Museum's Wall of Honor. He is also honored on Panel 65E, Line 11, of the Wall of Faces at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial here in Washington, DC. Private Joshua gave his country the best years of his life, a sacrifice we can never fully repay.

Sadly, his life is not the only instance of years cut short because of service to our country. Private First Class Thomas Stagg, known as Tommy, from Birmingham, AL, was declared missing in action in 1950 during the Korean war. He was 21 years old at the time. He and 10 other paratroopers from the U.S. Army 187th Regimental Combat Team were on a patrol in the Hwanghae Province when they were overwhelmed by Chinese forces. All 11 members were declared dead and missing in action.

Private Stagg received several awards for his services, including a Purple Heart and a National Defense Service Medal.

Private Stagg's nephew, Colonel Larry Leonard, was very young when his family received the news about his uncle, but he witnessed the toll it took on his mother who had already lost another brother during World War II. Colonel Leonard shared that his mother's dying wish was for her little brother to be found and returned to Birmingham to be buried alongside her and their parents. Five years ago, Colonel Leonard saw his mother's wish fulfilled. Thanks to the help of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency or the DPAA under the Department of Defense, Private Stagg's remains were identified and returned home for a proper memorial service in 2017, more than 67 years after he was declared missing.

Colonel Leonard says that while Memorial Day is a somber day, it is important to recognize those who "thought so much of their country they were willing to give their lives for it."

I know it is estimated more than 81,600 missing American soldiers are

still missing since World War I—81,600 still missing.

Some families are still searching for answers, like Teresa Schmitt of Huntsville, AL, who was only 8 years old when her father, U.S. Air Force Technical Sergeant Elbert Phillips' airplane crashed in the Mekong River during the Vietnam war. Sergeant Phillips' body was never recovered, but he was presumed dead and labeled missing in action.

Teresa was one of six children between the ages of 4 and 11 who were left behind. She spoke of the many days and nights she spent waiting to see if her father would ever be found and the heartbreak of growing up knowing that he would never be present to teach her how to ride a bike, meet her high school boyfriends, celebrate her graduation, or walk down the aisle at her wedding.

Teresa's mother committed to raising her children alone, never remarrying in the hopes that her husband would return. Sergeant Phillips received numerous awards for his courage, including the National Defense Service Medal with one Battle Star and the Air Force Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster. He is honored at the Huntsville Veterans Memorial in Alabama and on Panel 46W, Line 52, of the Wall of Faces at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial here in Washington, DC.

The Phillips family reminds us of the ordinary moments we take for granted and the immense sacrifice of Gold Star families.

Our military defends us abroad, but also protects us here right at home when acts of terror occur on American soil. That is the story of U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st class Marsha Ratchford, a native of Prichard, AL, who was killed when hijackers crashed American Airlines flight 77 into her office on the western side of the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

She is described by her family as someone with a huge, huge heart who was passionate about helping those in need. The 34-year-old mother left behind a husband and three young children ages 11, 8, and 18 months. She was awarded a Purple Heart for her courage in the wake of one of the most horrific days in America's history.

Officer Ratchford's son Rodney told the story of learning about his mother's passing when he arrived home to see his father crying as he held the telephone and recalled him seeing the Pentagon in flames on television. Rodney described the next day without his mother like "waking up in a new world." His teenage years were met with the struggles of relocating to be near loved ones without having his mother's loving hand as a guide.

Rodney's story is another heart-breaking example of Gold Star children who faced a childhood they didn't ask for but were given as a result of the unthinkable sacrifices their loved ones made for freedom. Their courage is no

doubt a testament to the brave parents who raised them.

It is impossible to speak of Gold Star families without mentioning the parents who are robbed of the joy of seeing their children grow up and have families of their own. Danny Jordan from Elba, AL, is one such Gold Star parent. Danny's son, U.S. Army Sergeant Jason Jordan of the 101st Airborne Division, was killed in the Iraqi village of Tallifar on the night of July 20, 2003, when his humvee was attacked by rocket-propelled grenades. Even though it was not required for the 24-year-old, he chose to go on patrol that night because he would not ask his company to do something he wasn't willing to do himself.

Because of his service and sacrifice, Sergeant Jordan earned the Combat Infantryman Badge, a Purple Heart, and a Gold Star. Sergeant Jordan is honored in Elba at the "Lest They Be Forgotten" memorial at Veterans Memorial Park in Alba.

Danny describes his son as a natural-born leader who led by example. He said Jason was studying chemical engineering prior to his military service but joined the military because he felt there was a need. Danny said Jason was a hard worker who loved his hometown, his State, and his country. To cope with his grief, Danny drives the truck that once belonged to his son. For fathers like Danny, holding onto ordinary possessions of their loved ones helps them feel close even after they have passed on.

These are the stories of Americans who gave their lives for freedom's cause—mothers, brothers, sisters, and sons who became heroes to all of us. There are many, many others who have made the ultimate sacrifice for all of us and for our country. These heroes lived lives of impact, driven by a desire to serve their country at any cost. We tell their story to keep their memory alive and ensure their sacrifices are never, never forgotten. And as long as there are brave men and women like those I've mentioned today, we can continue to sing the national anthem—not with a question mark, but with a declaration that we are the "land of the free and the home of the brave."

As Memorial Day approaches, I hope we will take the time to honor America's fallen, along with the brave families who they left behind and always remember that our freedoms were won by men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

NOMINATION OF DARA LINDENBAUM

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, Dara Lindenbaum is the President's nominee to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission. We are scheduled to vote on that nomination today.

On April 6, the Committee on Rules and Administration held a hearing to consider this nominee. She shared her